

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 000074

SIPDIS

NOFORN

STATE PASS DOE FOR DAS JBRODMAN AND CGAY
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS AND SRENENDER
COMMERCE FOR KBURRESS
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD
STATE PASS OPIC FOR ZHAN AND MSTUCKART
STATE PASS TDA FOR NCABOT
STATE PASS EXIM FOR JRICHTER
STATE PASS USTR FOR ASST USTR SLISER
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ
STATE FOR DS/IP/AF, AF/EX, DS/IP/OPO, DS/ICI/PII, DS/DSS/ITA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/20/2015

TAGS: [EPET](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [KHLs](#) [PINR](#) [ETRD](#) [CASC](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: OIL WORKER HOSTAGE UPDATE SITREP #10

REF: A. LAGOS 70 AND PREVIOUS

[B](#). ABUJA 76

Classified By: Acting Consul General William H. Howe for Reasons 1.4 (D
& E)

Hostage Welfare Update

[1](#)1. (U) An Ecodrill representative attempted to set up a delivery of medicine to sick AmCit Patrick Landry at 14:00 on January 20. Post will monitor future communication to learn whether the delivery arrived.

[1](#)2. (U) The kidnappers initiated at least 5 separate contacts between the night of January 19 and the morning of January 20. In one of the communications from January 19, they threatened that, if one hostage died, they would kill the others. They also boasted that they had rocket-propelled grenades and launchers and that they were better equipped than the Nigerian military. In an e-mail from January 20, they softened their previous demand for \$1.5 billion in environmental damage reparations, adding as an alternative that Shell provide a firm commitment of its desire to "settle the claim immediately." They stressed again their demand for the release of Ex-Governor Alamieyeseigha and Asari as well as continued threats of future attacks. A previous communication

[1](#)3. (C) Comment. Some USG and UK officials believe the softening of the monetary demand indicates a certain level of anxiety on the part of the kidnappers. In addition, they are increasing their number of communications (Reuters is receiving as many as three contacts daily now) as well as their number of contact points. In addition to the Nigerian State Security Service (SSS), the Associated Press, Reuters, Tidex, Bloomberg, and possibly others have received communications from them. End Comment.

Nigerian Government Response Still Disorganized

[1](#)4. (C) The Bayelsa State Governor, Goodluck Jonathan, head of the executive committee appointed to free the hostages, asked British diplomats for any possible assistance. HMG plans to establish a presence at committee meetings, request input into any operations plan drafted, and with the approval of the Governor invited USG representatives to participate.

[1](#)5. (C) Jonathan said they have been in touch with 30 different community groups claiming to have a link with the kidnappers, and believed three "might" be real. He said the full committee has not met yet. They have not agreed on an operations plan nor have they even settled a time for the first meeting as the Minister of State for Petroleum Resources Daukoru was unavailable. Further, the Governor did not realize that the kidnappers had made contact with a State Security Service (SSS) officer in Port Harcourt.

[1](#)6. (C) Guy Colegate, the Shell crisis team leader in Warri, said the Governor is isolated, acting in a vacuum with very little support. Department of Petroleum Resources Director Chukwueke told us the President had sent Bayelsa-native Minister Daukoru to the capital of Yenagoa today to bolster support for newly appointed governor Jonathan.

[1](#)7. (C) Colegate also said there is a sense that there is pressure within the military to act in the hostage situation. Meanwhile, Shell provided the military with more than fifty satellite phones, and there is a question as to whether they can be accounted for. (Comment: When asked about the

phones, a Shell representative asked where USG officials got the information. Realizing that another Shell employee had provided the information, he then answered the question. End Comment.)

Attacks or Rumors of Attacks Continue

18. (SBU) Delta-based sources reported that 6 soldiers were killed in fighting in the Ekeremor local government area, where most believe the kidnappers are based. Chevron reportedly shut down operations at the Riverine facility near Escravos and requested two navy patrol boats.

19. (SBU) On January 19, junior and senior oil workers unions issued a joint statement calling on the government to quell instability in the Delta or "we shall not hesitate to withdraw our members...operating in the region." A high-level official at PENGASSAN said the message was intended to shake the government to action. Neither he nor the government expect it to lead to any labor action.

U.S. Mission Actions

10. (S/NF) USG officials are considering the role of Tom Ashby, Reuters Chief Correspondent, in facilitating communications with the hostages. He continues to provide tapes and printouts of messages he receives, but is unwilling to provide source information. The hostage-takers, however, seem to trust Ashby and are relying on him for routine communications, and have provided him with repeated signs of life. Negotiating experts from HMG and USG believe, for now, we should continue to work with him to reach the hostages on humanitarian grounds.

10. (C) Along with Scotland Yard counterparts, the FBI is developing a variety of scenarios for the recovery of the hostages. FBI has also been in constant contact with Patrick Landry's wife.

11. (U) This cable has been cleared by Embassy Abuja.
HOWE